

**PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PED)  
POLICY COMMITTEE  
Teleconference MEETING  
June 10, 2020**

**Members Present:** Councilmember Francoise Bergan, Chair; Councilmember Crystal Murillo, Vice Chair, Councilmember Allison Hiltz, Councilmember Curtis Gardner, Councilmember Marsha Berzins, Councilmember Dave Gruber

**Others Present:** Jason Batchelor, George Adams, Andrea Amonick, Mindy Parnes, Marcia McGilley, Daniel Krzyzanowski, Elena Vasconez, Vinessa Irvin, Bob Oliva, Mac Callison, Tanner Axt, Julianna Berry, Chris Johnson, Claire Dalby, Karen Hancock, Elizabeth Fuselier, Sarah Wile, Marisa Noble, Jeffrey Moore, Tod Kuntzelman, Kevin Hougen, Dennis Lyon, Gayle Jetchick, Melvin Bush, Brad Pierce, Bob Gaiser, Chance Horiuchi, Yuriy Gorlov, Becky Hogan, Mark Witkiewicz, Garrett Walls, Stephen Ruger, Stephenie Baca

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

May 13, 2020 minutes were approved.

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**AURORA PLACES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2020 REPORT**

Summary of Issue and Discussion:

Daniel Krzyzanowski gave a PowerPoint presentation to update the committee on Aurora Places 2020 Report. He gave a summary of the report contents and explained each section of the report. The report contains the following sections:

1. Introduction and Overview
2. Development Activity Report
3. Emerging Issues and Trends
4. Status of Action Items
5. Recommended Amendments

Daniel informed of highlights about three major redevelopment projects located in Aurora which are Parkside at City Center, Painted Prairie, and Argenta.

He mentioned that Parkside at City Center is a mixed-use redevelopment project is currently under construction and includes urban-scaled multi-family, retail and restaurants with thoughtful branding and tenant selections, has connectivity to streets and amenities surrounding the development and sets the tone, scale, and ambition for development in the City Center area.

Painted Prairie project is an Emerging Neighborhood placetype that is located south of Gaylord Resort and 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue and its first residential phase is under construction.

Argenta project is a City Corridor placetype located at the northwest corner of Havana Street and East 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue with infrastructure work underway with the first residential phase to start construction in 2020. Representative of the type of infill and redevelopment that we could see along major corridors. Mix of rental and for sale product integrated with retail and commercial space.

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Information on demographics and other data trends as well as the significant issues relating to COVID-19 impacts; RTD service changes; housing affordability; and retail market trends were mentioned and noted that much of the data in Aurora Places is 2016 Census Bureau data and the most recent detailed ACS data is 2018. In just two years of this sample data, most key data trends haven't seen notable change.

Median household income has increased in both Aurora and in the metro area which reinforces the anecdotal reports of wages seeing growth.

Action items and their status was shared as:

- Smart City Initiative – Strategic plan completed in 2020
- Zoning Code Update – UDO adopted in 2019
- Housing Strategic Plan – In progress
- Area Planning Program:
  - 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue Mobility and Urban Design Plan – In progress
  - City Center Vision and Development Framework – In progress
  - Havana Street Corridor – In progress
- PROS Strategic Plan – In progress
- Arts and Arts – Supportive Facilities – In progress
- NE Area Mobility and Accessibility Program – In progress
- Complete Streets Policy and Guidelines – In progress
- Aurora Line (R Line) TMA – Initiated
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan – Initiated

Daniel mentioned that this report does not have to be adopted and is for informational purposes only. Staff will present this report to the Planning Commission on June 24, 2020.

Q: Chair Bergan asked if the public will be able to listen in to the Planning Commission meeting where the report will be presented next because of technical difficulties that were encountered at today's meeting?

A: Daniel said yes and that it will also be added to the city website for the public to review.

Q: Councilmember Hiltz asked about the changes in human behavior and how that is reflecting changes in the retail sector and to what extent will that impact current construction projects that are already in progress?

A: Daniel said that staff is hearing that many of the developers want to continue forward with their projects and that they understand the impacts COVID-19 has made to the retail sector which may be influence how they build out their projects. The Retail Manager Bob Oliva is keeping a close eye on projects and staff will continue to brief the committee as updates occur.

Q: Councilmember Hiltz asked if there are conversations happening about the incentives for new developments and wanted to know about the impacts it has on incentive for new structures to be built? Also, asked about the impact on the city's vision for growth and development and if council will be updated on amendment changes to the Aurora Places Comprehensive Plan?

A: Daniel said that all incentives are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and that all of those projects are unique.

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Staff is working closely with the developers for any adjustment that will need to be made due to COVID-19. The long-term effects of COVID-19 on the community and the city's budget and operations are only starting to be understood. Much of the impact on Aurora, the region, and the local economic has yet to unfold. If the impacts of COVID-19 necessitate a change to the city's vision for growth and development, city council may direct staff to bring forward amendments to the Aurora Places Plan, but staff will continue to keep council and the Planning Commission will be appropriately briefed on any upcoming recommended amendments to the plan.

Mark Witkiewicz commented that he found an article on the potential impact post COVID-19 retail and said the biggest thing that is needed to move forward is flexibility to have inside and outside space, and to be able to act quickly should there be another future potential outbreak and that this is more catered to public spaces rather than to commercial and industrial projects.

QUESTION FOR COMMITTEE: Should staff distribute the written report to all City Council members?

Outcome: This item was for informational purposes only

Follow-up Action: No follow-up action required for this committee.

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## MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

### Small Business Update (Marcia McGilley):

- The SBDC is still mostly in the response phase in helping citizens research find and apply for federal, state, local and private funding grants and loans. Staff continue to research and refer citizens to resources available for all areas of business recovery, reopening and closing.
- Year to date, the Center has served 367 clients in 800 sessions of one-on-one consulting. To date, we have offered 52 webinars with 935 attendees. Both goals surpass annual goals set.
- Hired and onboarding new Consultant, Claudia Yanez, our bilingual consultant who is an expert in assisting citizens with starting businesses, business plans, COOP business models and general business topics.
- Marcia continues to spend time on the assessment phase to determine what is needed for the recovery phase.
- Staff continues to work with a fully remote business model for one-on-one consulting sessions and educational webinars. This model has shown a significant increase in attendance at one-on-one sessions and webinars (50% increase in attendance). Citizens have shared that they appreciate not needing to get day care and drive to an office for appointments or workshops and enjoy the flexibility of home learning.
- Consulting has begun on the forgiveness portions of the Economic Injury Disaster Loan, and EIDL Advance and the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). Recent extension of time allowances for applying for forgiveness, percentage of payroll to operating expenses, and coverage timelines, etc. have changed in favor of the small business owner. We will offer two webinars on the forgiveness portion of the programs.
- All services are provided in both English and Spanish.
- We continue to see an increase in citizens inquiring about starting a business, which is not unusual during times of recession, and we continue to offer the "Fired Up: I Want to Start a Business" and the Start-Up Track of webinars. Two in English and two in Spanish are offered monthly.

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- The Spanish language business planning and launching webinar this month has 19 participants in the course.
- Capital infusion will increase due to EIDL, EIDL Advance, PPP and the Aurora Economic Relief (AER) programs. We are beginning to track this economic impact.
- Advancing Colorado Procurement Expo (ACPE) originally scheduled at the Aurora Hyatt Hotel on October 29<sup>th</sup> will most likely be a virtual event. The City of Aurora is the presenting sponsor. The format is still being planned.
- Our “Resiliency Series” of webinars will begin this month (June) with two Marketing sessions. Marketing Content and Marketing Tactics and Tools in response to COVID-19.
- Marcia serves on the Arapahoe County Recovery Task Force and the SBDC will be promoting the A/D Works! Business Conference programs
- Early Childcare Center and COOP group training for the immigrant and refugee population (one consultant is certified in the COOP business model) will be slated for Fall of 2020 or Spring of 2021.
- The SBDC is still in the response phase in helping citizens research to find and apply for federal, state, local and private funding sources. Staff continues to research and refer citizens to resources available for all areas of closing, reopening and pre-planning for the future after the pandemic.
- While all staff are assisting citizens with fully remote one-on-one consulting sessions and webinars, Marcia mentioned that she is beginning to spend some of her time working on the assessment phase to determine what is needed next.
- Staff is working remotely communicating through WebEx, video conferencing, MS Teams and other means to keep staff and clients informed.
- All information is provided in English and Spanish.
- Year to date, the Center has served 344 clients, with 728 sessions with a total of 804 hours of consulting. Staff has provided 49 webinars with 909 attendees; annual goals are 53 workshops and 890 attendees. These numbers surpass the annual numbers from the past. and have already reached 310 clients to date.
- There has been an increase in citizens inquiring about starting a business, which is not unusual during times of recession.
- Capital infusion will increase due to EIDL, EIDL Advance, PPP and the Aurora Economic Relief programs.
- Summit Event Center is being transformed to a co-working space
- Staff is working very hard on finding creative ways for businesses to pivot their business model
- Webinars in the works: Resiliency Series, COOP group training for the immigrant and refugee population (one consultant is certified in the COOP business model).
- Received a \$1000 grant from the State of Colorado to offer a Spanish language business planning webinar in June. This will be four 33-hour webinar classes on “How to Build a Strategic Plan to Operate Your Business During this Time.”

Aurora Economic Development Council Update (Yuriy Gorlov):

- AEDC is taking in new inquiries and keeping the pipeline full
- Brought 7 deals that will create 1000 jobs and the combined total capital investment is around \$300 million
- AEDC is confident that we will continue attracting deals in industrial sector, consumer goods, data, and cargo logistics
- In unison with Jag two logistic companies occupying 130,000 sf combined space in Porteos

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- We are talking to solar developers who want to activate energy farms and renewal energy
- Market status is steady, lease rates are holding steady, but vacancy rates are down because of absorption
- Working on trends in the office sector in TOD and Class A and focusing on the “New Normal” with setting up office space for social distancing and figuring out what real estate values will be for long-term office space utilization.

Havana Business Improvement District (Chance Hourichi):

- During the time of the Safe at Home Order our district has 22 closures (3 permanent: Dental office did not renew lease, La Pily (former Thai Basil) & Imone Korean Restaurant (former Paris Bakery/Menya & now Seoul ManDoo Korean Dumpling spot)
- Most of the closures are gyms, spas, bingo, event centers and bars
- 99 + restaurants and all of the Havana Motor Mile (20+ auto dealers + 100 auto services) are re-open, with about 80% all offering dine-in services at 50% capacity
- Mayor Call with some restaurants on June 11, 2020 2-3pm regarding 50% capacity challenges
- Retailers began to re-open and restaurants began to offer dine in services in late May/early June
- Many businesses are more optimistic during re-openings
- Construction On-Going - Argenta, Stinker Stores and the Kum & Go are moving forward and in progress
- During this time the board has authorized purchasing of gift cards to support small businesses and sponsoring marketing, ads and commercials to promote OnHavanaStreet is open for business
- We have had many inquiries from other businesses wanting to relocate and open in Aurora On Havana Street.
- We have been connecting new leads to Frank Butz and Robert Oliva, retail specialists and Aurora (inquiries from a Korean Bakery, Soul Food Restaurant, other restaurants wanted to relocated to Havana and a music venue)
- The small businesses in Aurora are grateful to the city staff, leadership and council for the AER and looking forward to an update from the AER program. Plus, hopeful to hear more about the Business Support Grant program for safety and COVID-19 related expenses
- BID continues to post trainings and webinars with resources during COVID-19
- BID is in constant communication with stakeholders and hosting direct phone calls and check in’s
- Census campaigns and outreach continued
- Majority of our Corridor is re-opened and doing their best to remain open during this time

Aurora Chamber of Commerce Update (Kevin Hougen):

- Virtual Conference on 6/11/20, partnering with Arapahoe/Douglas Works program on Business Recovery, panelists include Betsy Markey, Executive Director of OEIDT (State) and Joe Barela, Executive Director of Labor and Employment (Gov. Polis cabinet) along with Mike O’Donnell, Colorado Lending Source, and Tri-County Health as panelists.
- CARES Act, mini-grant program with Adams County. The Chamber has \$300,000 for small business grants (companies with 25 or less employees), Aurora companies physically in Adams County. \$2,500 for business operations related to COVID-19, \$1,000 grant for technology grants, and \$1,000 grants for compliance issues. (\$4,500 total grants per company).
- Update on Space Command coming to Colorado, (temporarily in Colorado Springs) Aurora has a committee established with experts from the community, including help from Denver and Centennial.
- Update on the frustration of getting the Town Center of Aurora (3,000 employees, 130 stores) open and the Stanley Market Place. The Town Center should open this week.

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- Information on the Colorado General Assembly and the dangers of SB 216 (workers comp) and SB 215 (Health care costs) and SB 213 (allowing restaurants to continue to sell Alcohol from store fronts).

Planning Commission Update (Dennis Lyon):

- Two new Planning Commission members, Becky Hogan and Esther Turcios have been a welcome addition. They have been through some training and participated in their first Planning Commission meeting on May 27th.
- The Chair has also been working with Jeffrey Moore on the Public Hearing process for oil and gas locations. A public hearing is required regarding these locations. The Planning Commission meetings are a logical place to conduct these hearings. This process has not yet started.
- The Planning Commission is also looking forward to reviewing the proposed modifications to the Comprehensive Plan as well as the UDO updates, prior to making a recommendation to Council.

Business Advisory Board Update (Garrett Walls):

- The BAB met on Tuesday May 26<sup>th</sup> and welcomed our newest appointee, Chance Horiuchi of the Havana BID. She will be representing Councilmember Dave Gruber. We are excited that we only have 1 unappointed vacancy on the Board currently, which is the appointee for Ward 2.
- The BAB had 3 main agenda items for the May meeting and an update on the AER Grant/Loan Program: Commander Wright of AFD was the first on our agenda. He presented a very helpful checklist of items for business owners to use as a reminder guide for reopening businesses. He pointed out that businesses that have been closed for a few months may not remember to check some of the fundamental life safety systems that are in tenant spaces and businesses as they reopen, anything from checking the valves of wet systems which would be sprinkler suppression systems, to testing their alarms, the push bars on exit doors, storing flammable items like high-alcohol sanitizer and cleaning supplies, and making sure any burned out bulbs in exit sign lighting are replaced and that fire extinguishers haven't expired. Very common-sense things that a lot of business owners can easily forget to check before reopening.
- Trevor Vaugh presented the modification proposal to the Lodger's Tax exemption, which mainly changes the scope of the exemption to a natural person rather than the more broad application of the exemption that can cover corporations or entities, like the airlines. Members of the board were concerned that this small change might have an adverse effect on members of the unhoused community or the organizations that support the unhoused that provide shelter in a long-term stay. Trevor assured the board that this definition change would not affect those already exempt groups. The intent was for large corporations that buy blocks of rooms like the airline industry to pay their fair share in the City of Aurora. The board supported the proposal unanimously.
- Then the Board heard from Stephanie Mufic, who is the Business Services Supervisor for Arapahoe Douglas Works. She presented on the current unemployment numbers and the effect of CoVid-19 up to the first week of May. It was shocking to see that Arapahoe County represents about a 13% of the unemployment claims in the state of Colorado. Stephanie then explained how the Unemployment Trust works verses the Federal PUA program. We had Stephanie present so that we could start to prepare business owners for a reality where the UI Trust fund gets depleted. We want business owners and the community not just to be aware of the current situation with COVID, but to also understand some of the potential issues that might affect payroll and overall operating costs in the next year to 3 years. She also explained how the Work Share program could be a benefit to business owners rather than simply laying-off employees, it works as more of a partnership with the State to keep employees paid and working.

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- The Board highly recommends that City Council tap Stephanie and the Arapahoe Douglas Works for resources and information.
- Finally, we had an update on the AER Grant and Loan program. The board continues to express concern about this program and would like to understand the rubric used to select recipients of the funds and is also concerned about the overall timeline of the program. The BAB is happy and proud that the City is sponsoring a program like this for the business community but wants to make sure it truly reaches those who need it, in a realistic timeline.

Oil & Gas Advisory Committee Update (Brad Pierce):

Recently the Jeffrey Moore, Oil & Gas Division Manager, made a presentation to City Council on the Oil & Gas Manual he's developing. There will be a public comment period. When the Manual becomes available, which I hope will be soon, the Oil & Gas Advisory Committee will review it and provide comments. Our next committee meeting will be in July.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Francoise Bergan, PED Committee Chair

Next meeting date: July 8, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. Teleconference meeting